VOISS Implementation Guide

The 8 Steps of Prompting (Most to Least)

1. Select the target skill

When selecting the target skill, make sure the skill is defined in measurable terms. One way to determine if the skill is identified in a measurable way is to ask yourself, "Can I see the skill happening? Does the skill have an obvious start and stop component?"

2. Identify the naturally occurring situations or events that require the spontaneous use of the skill

This step refers to the situations that should naturally prompt the individual to use the desired skill. It is important to identify these target situations because the goal is for the learner to identify the situations as the prompt or cue to use the skill, rather than relying on an external prompt or cue from the teacher.

3. Identify the general instructional cues or task directions

It is important to remember that a prompt is any type of cue given to a learner AFTER the general instruction has been delivered. The general instruction is simply any type of communication used to request the use of the target skill. In some situations, the general instruction will be the situation that should result in the use of the desired skill; however, other times, the naturally occurring event may be the natural cue to initiate the target skill or behavior.

4. Determine the prompting hierarchy levels

When using most to least prompting, the most assistive prompt is used first that has the highest probability of evoking the desired behavior. Once you notice the learner is consistently using the skill (based on the mastery criteria) for the given type of prompt, you can start with the previous prompt that requires less assistance the next time. For example, if the teacher has delivered the general instruction of "get out your ipads" to start the daily lesson, the teacher using Most-to-Least prompting may implement the following prompting sequence:

- Model prompt (The teacher provides a demonstration)
- Visual Prompt (The teacher holds up the ipad)
- Gestural Prompt (The teacher points the ipad)

5. Establish the mastery criterion

It is important that you establish a criteria for mastery to guide the data collection step of this implementation guide. For example, you may be able to say the learner has mastered a skill if the learner has exhibited the skill three consecutive times when presented with the naturally occurring event or general instruction.

6. Identify how you will reinforce the skill

In order to increase the likelihood of the learner to use the desired skill, decide on how you reinforce the skill. This can be done by giving specific praise to the learner such as, "great job writing down your homework, or by implementing some other type of token/reward system.

7. Implementing Most to Least Prompting

- The naturally occurring event (bell that signals the end of class) or general instruction is delivered ("Begin your test").
- Provide a sufficient amount of "wait time" to give the learner a chance to use the skill without prompting. The wait time should match the learner's cognitive and processing skill. Some learners may require 3-5 seconds, while others may require 8-10 seconds.
- If the learner **uses** the skill within the predetermined "wait time", deliver the reinforcement type established in step 5.
- If the learner **does not** use the skill within the predetermined "wait time", deliver the first prompt (most assistive) from the prompting hierarchy established in step
    - If the learner exhibits the target skill after the first prompt, provide the reinforcement type established in step 5.
    - If the learner **does not** exhibit the target skill after the first prompt is given then the teacher should (a) establish the learner's attention, (b) deliver the most assistive prompt, and (c) reinforce the learner for using the skill.
- It is extremely important when using this type of prompting procedure to ensure the most assistive prompt (first one in the hierarchy) evokes the desired behavior. If you notice this is not happening, consider using a different type of most assistive prompt or reevaluate the type of reinforcement you are giving the learner (the learner may require a token system or another type of reward system).

8. Data Collection, Progress Monitoring & Prompt Fading

Collect data that specifically targets at which step of the prompting implementation the learner is using the skill. If you notice the learner is continuing to only use the skill under the first prompt (most assistive) in the hierarchy as determined by the mastery criteria, the next time, start with the 2nd prompt in your hierarchy that is less assistive. Continue this process until you reach the final prompt in the hierarchy that requires the least amount of assistance. Once the learner has mastered this skill, you should switch to least to most prompting for the given skill.